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DE RUEHMD #2092 3121927
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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 1508
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3773
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO RUEHXP/ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 002092

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JCS FOR CHAIRMAN, USNATO FOR AMBASSADOR NULAND, OSD FOR
DASD FATA, USEUCOM FOR COMMANDER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/08/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: NATO MILITARY COMMITTEE VOTE - SPANISH MAKE FINAL
PLEA

Classified By: AMBASSADOR EDUARDO AGUIRRE, JR. REASONS 1.4B AND D.

11. (C) DCM met November 7 with Secretary of State for Defense Policy Luis Cuesta. Cuesta raised the CHOD Sanz' candidacy for Chair of the NATO Military Committee, noting that all three countries seeking the post -- Italy, Poland, and Spain -- had much to recommend them. However, he noted that Italy, as a NATO member since its creation, had held the post previously, as well as other important NATO positions. Poland, a country still in transition, was a newcomer to NATO. Spain, on the other hand, had over two decades of solid participation in NATO but had never held the chair. Cuesta said Spain and Sanz were strong backers of NATO, the NATO Response Force concept (to which Spain is a major troop provider) and the NATO effort in Afghanistan. He highlighted Sanz' leadership on all those issues. Cuesta added that with France moving closer to the alliance and change no doubt coming, this was the moment for a proven leader such as Sanz.

12. (C) Comment: While we cannot compare the relative merits of the three candidates, this Embassy can say that Cuesta is absolutely right about Sanz' commitment to NATO and to the increased constructive engagement of Spain internationally. Sanz is pro-U.S. and would work well with us as chairman. Moreover, his election would do much to persuade the Spanish public that this country has an important role to play in international security affairs.
AGUIRRE